I have seen the Istagosthi notes of your meetings which were sent by Lilavati, and you are doing very nice in speaking on the principles of Krishna Consciousness. So with your speaking talents there is so much valuable preaching work that you will have opportunity to do to relieve the burden of the suffering humanity. So more and more try to develop this skill, such able speakers as yourself are a great boon to spreading this movement of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. 690613_-_Lecture_SB_01.05.13_-_New_Vrindaban

Therefore satya-śravāḥ, śuci-śravāḥ. Śuci-śravāḥ. You have to hear from the pure source, give aural reception, and think of it, meditate upon it. Simply by doing this, you are liberated. These are not bluff. Here is the evidence. Simply receive the message from the right source and contemplate and meditate upon that instruction—you are liberated. Chanting and hearing. Hearing and . . . śravaṇaṁ kīrtanam (SB 7.5.23). First hearing, then chanting. Hear from the right source and discuss amongst yourselves, iṣṭagoṣṭhi. Then the perfection. 681228_-_Letter_to_Gaurasundara_written_from_Los_Angeles

“Regarding general state of affairs at Amsterdam temple, I can understand there is some disturbance among you, but that is not to be taken very seriously. Real business is preaching work, and if there is full attention on this matter only, all other businesses will be automatically successful. Fighting amongst ourselves is not at all good, but if our preaching work is neglected, or if we fall down in following the regulative principles such as rising before four, chanting 16 rounds, like that, if these things are not strictly observed then maya will enter and spoil everything. So my best advice to you is to strictly observe these things yourself and be the example so that all others may follow. We should not criticize each other, as Vaisnavas, because there is fault in everyone and we may be ourselves subject to criticism. Best thing is to be above suspicion ourselves, then if we see discrepancies and make suggestion the others will automatically respect and take action to rectify the matters. That is cooperation. And we must exist on such cooperation, otherwise the whole thing is doomed if we simply go on fighting over some small thing. So try to organize things and preach together in this spirit, and that will please me very, very much.”---721118_-_Letter_to_Madhumangala_written_from_Hyderabad

Regarding the topics of the Krsna book, this is Istagosthi. Istagosthi means discussion between ourselves but that should not be taken as a competition. It is not the subject matter for competition. It can be discussed in a small group of devotees. That is Istagosthi. This is better than competition. 751110_-_Letter_to_Kirtanananda_written_from_Bombay

“So sometimes the disciple and the spiritual master, the relationship is like that. Sometimes the teacher questions to the student, and student replies, and sometimes the student questions to the teacher, and teacher replies. This is called iṣṭagoṣṭhī. To develop knowledge, these questions and answers are required. According to system of accepting a spiritual master, it is said that just after acceptance . . . Ādau gurvāśrayam (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.1.74).

One must have to accept a spiritual master. Then the next position is sad-dharma-pṛcchāt: then he should be very much inquisitive. A student . . . not

finishing, that "Now I am initiated. Everything finished." No. He should be very inquisitive.

Unless one is very inquisitive, there is no necessity of accepting a spiritual master. That is the instruction in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Tasmād guruṁ prapadyeta jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam (SB 11.3.21).

One has the necessity of accepting a spiritual master who is very much inquisitive about transcendental matter. Otherwise, there is no necessity. Simply, "Oh, because so many people accept a spiritual master, so I'll have to accept somebody as spiritual master. My business finished"—no. One should be very much inquisitive. Yes. He must be very much eager to understand what is transcendental subject. Then his, this business of accepting a spiritual master will be fulfilled." 661127_-_Lecture_CC_Madhya_20.66-96_-_New_York

And then further development is friendship. Friendship means . . . service means I ask you, "Please give me a glass of water." You give me. And friendship means you are thinking, "How my friend will be . . . now he may be wanting a glass of water." So before asking me, if you give me, "I think you may require a glass of water," that is friendship. Friendship means feeling friend's welfare always. Suhṛt. Friendship is not simply chatting. Friendship means thinking, "How my friend will be happy?" This is friendship. 690510_-_Conversation_-_Columbus

We have got our relationship in this world, we call that "He is my friend," suhṛt Suhṛt and mitra. There are two kinds of friends. Suhṛt means better friend. Actually who is always desiring my welfare, he is called suhṛt. And friend means we have got good will, ordinary friends. Suhṛn mitra udāsīna. Udāsīna means neutral, neither friend nor enemy. 660905_-_Lecture_BG_06.04-12_-_New_York

SB 3.29.17, Purport:
According to devotional vision, a man is poor if he is not in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. A man may be very rich materially, but if he is not Kṛṣṇa conscious, he is considered poor. On the other hand, many ācāryas, such as Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sanātana Gosvāmī, used to live beneath trees every night. Superficially it appeared that they were poverty-stricken, but from their writings we can understand that in spiritual life they were the richest personalities.

A devotee shows compassion to those poor souls who are wanting in spiritual knowledge by enlightening them in order to elevate them to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That is one of the duties of a devotee. He should also make friendship with persons who are on an equal level with himself or who have the same understanding that he does. For a devotee, there is no point in making friendships with ordinary persons; he should make friendship with other devotees so that by discussing among themselves, they may elevate one another on the path of spiritual understanding. This is called iṣṭa-goṣṭhī.

Letter to Advaita -- Seattle 6 October, 1968:
Regarding binding: Some of our students also may learn the art, and so far I know, binding cost should not go beyond 40 cents. Please inform Balai dasi with my blessings, that I have received the report of the Istagosthi, and it is very nice. Especially the portion in which Rayarama and Purusottama's presentation to deal with newcomers is very nice. We should not disturb the newcomers immediately with opposite proposals, but tactfully we shall try to teach him in our ways, and gradually he will come to understand this policy is very nice, and approved by me.

Letter to Ranadhira -- Los Angeles 24 January, 1970:
I am very glad to learn that the small children are also increasing their dispositions and service attitude. Please get it recognized and increase the activities of the school more and more. All the devotees who desire to know may ask their questions to the elderly members but still they are open to write me for all their questions and there should not be any hesitation. I reply each and every letter that I receive, but sometimes it may be a little late due to pressure of work. But they should write; there is no checking. But it is better if simple questions are solved amongst yourselves in the Istagosthi class. Every one of you must regularly read our books at least twice—in the morning and evening, and automatically all questions will be answered.